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THE DELPHIAN HYMN TO APOLLO.¹

Several finds have been made recently at Delphi of inscrip-
tional poems — *ἀναθήματα* to the god — in form resembling the
paeon of Isyllus, found at Epidaurus. Some of these poems are
provided with a musical notation, comprising the notes of a melody.
Most of the poems are small fragments only; but one is a pretty long
fragment containing a considerable part of a Hymn to Apollo. It
has been published by Theodore Reinach in the *Bulletin de corres-
pondance hellénique*, 1894.

The inscription is upon two slabs which contain the beginning and
the continuation of the hymn, and at least one more slab has been
lost. The first slab is badly mutilated, containing, especially in the
lower part, only the middle of lines. The second slab is nearly com-
plete, requiring small supplements only. The author of the poem,
whose name has disappeared, was an Athenian, as is shown by the
word [*Ἀθ*]ῆναιος at the beginning of the inscription.

The first slab contains ascriptions of praise to Apollo, the second
an invitation to the Muses to celebrate him.

The metre consists of straightforward *paeons* (= cretics) with no
breaks and with no visible strophic arrangement, agreeing in this
respect with Isyllus's paeon which is, however, in *ionic* rhythm. There
are frequent resolutions of both the first and the second longs, indi-
cating with certainty $\frac{5}{8}$ rhythm.

The time of the poem is after 279 B.C., as is shown by mention of
the Gaulish invasion. The epigraphical indications agree with this
conclusion, and so it may be assigned to the Macedonian period, the
middle of the third century B.C.

This and the other lyric fragments found at Delphi confirm what
we learned from Isyllus's poem : — that *lyric poetry was written by the*

¹ [The following article gives, with insignificant changes, the notes prepared by
Professor Allen for a paper read by him in July, 1894, at a meeting of the Ameri-
can Philological Association, at Williamstown, Mass. The object of the paper
was to show " what accretion (if any) there is to our knowledge of ancient poetry
and music " from the recently discovered Hymn to Apollo. — A. A. H.]

ancient Greeks like prose. Its phrases were rhythmical divisions, and not verses, nor was there any attempt to represent the verses to the eye. Any such divisions which we find in manuscripts, or make in our printed books, are without authenticity or authority; they are only guesses.

A curious feature in the text of those fragments with "music-notes" is that, whenever a syllable is divided between two notes, the vowel is written double: so Φοιοῖβος, etc. This is true even in the case of *short* vowels: so Δεελφίστιν. This peculiarity was not previously known; it does not appear in any of the manuscript-specimens of Greek music. There are over thirty cases in which it appears in this poem.

The method of duplication is interesting and instructive. A simple vowel, whether short or long, is repeated. With diphthongs, however, there is a diversity of treatment; three of them repeat the whole diphthong, viz. εῖ (5 cases), οῖ (4 cases), and οῦ (3 cases). This is not true, however, for αῖ, εῦ, and αῦ; εῦ is doubled as εοῦ, αῦ as αοῦ (1 case each), and αῖ as αεῖ or αἰεῖ. The reason of this is clear; the two elements of the diphthong are distributed between the two notes: thus α-οῦ, ε-οῦ in each of which οῦ represent simply the *ū*-sound, α-εῖ where εῖ represents simply the *ī*-sound. The case of αῖ-εῖ is slightly different, for here we find the *ī*-element in both parts.

Obviously the actual repetition of both elements, in pronunciation, would be grotesque, and the question arises, how are we to understand the graphic repetition in the case of the three diphthongs first mentioned? This, too, readily explains itself, for εῖ and οῦ were at this time monophthongs and therefore εῖ-εῖ and οῦ-οῦ are equivalent simply to *ī-ī* and *ū-ū*. It follows, therefore, with absolute certainty that οῖ was also monophthongal (equivalent to *ō* or *ū*).

As to the music; the first question is naturally about the method of notation. This is by signs above the syllables, each sign indicating the pitch. There is no indication of the length of notes or rhythm, this being left entirely to inference. The signs agree perfectly with those known to us from Greek writers on music, and with those found in the other specimens of Greek music. These signs are perfectly well known, and there is no doubt as to their value, except in so far as,

owing to the complex system of notation, we find notes with two values, and again two notes representing the same sound.

Two systems of signs were used by the ancients, one of them, according to the writers, for vocal, the other for instrumental music, and this is no doubt the distinction in later times. But it has been dimly guessed that this distinction was not original, and that the two systems were originally independent local systems. This view is confirmed by the Delphian finds, for the Hymn to Apollo has the vocal notes, while some of the smaller fragments have instrumental notes set, however, above the vowels (with duplications) and evidently meant for singing. This discovery again reacts on another problem. The melody to Pindar's first Pythian ode, printed by the Jesuit Kircher from manuscript (as he said), has often been thought spurious, one ground being the fact that it was noted partly in instrumental notes. This ground of suspicion is now removed.

There are fourteen signs employed in the Hymn to Apollo, and they indicate pretty clearly the Phrygian key, or key of three flats, according to Greek reckoning, the actual pitch being, however, a third lower than the modern key of three flats. Comparing the scheme of fourteen signs with Alypius's tables, there can be no doubt that the key is, in the main, Phrygian.

The next question is as to whether it is diatonic, chromatic, or enharmonic. The diatonic Phrygian scale, as given by Alypius, contains, if we count both of its two forms (*diezeugmenon* and *synemmenon*), all but four of the fourteen signs. The enharmonic or chromatic Phrygian scale, both of which are noted the same although differently sounded, contains all but two of the signs, and is the nearest approximation to the scheme of the fourteen notes. There are several passages which show a wailing movement of the melody up and down through small intervals, and which suggest strongly the chromatic or enharmonic treatment. Another point is the persistent omission of Π (b̄) which is an important note of the diatonic scale, but is omitted in the chromatic (enharmonic) scale.

There is nevertheless great difficulty in supposing the whole to have been so treated and in assuming our composition to be altogether chromatic (enharmonic). There are many passages, especially in the first half, where Θ (ē or ē) and Γ (f) are successively used.

Now in the chromatic (enharmonic) *diezeugmenon* Γ is an omitted note, and in the chromatic (enharmonic) *synemmenon* Θ is an omitted note. We can, it is true, and must assume that both *diezeugmenon* and *synemmenon* scales are employed in this composition, but it is very difficult to suppose that they are mixed, in the same passage, in such a manner that a note belonging exclusively to one should be followed by a note belonging exclusively to the other. These two notes (e♭, f) both belong in the diatonic *diezeugmenon*. Add to this that the parts where this succession occurs so frequently are free from the wailing successions I spoke of, and we can hardly avoid thinking (with Reinach) that the melody is partly diatonic and partly either chromatic or enharmonic.

The notation of both scales is the same and so gives no indication as to which was used. A specimen of the difference may be shown by the following tetrachord:

enharmonic	g	<u>a*♭</u>	a♭	c
chromatic	g	a♭	a♯	c
Both marked	Ϝ	ϝ	*	M'

whereby ϝ and * get different pitch. There are no means of deciding the question save on the grounds of general probability. Reinach decides for the chromatic, because in the time of Aristoxenus enharmonic music was obsolescent, and was understood and appreciated by a few only. Add to this that the chromatic, in our piece, would go better with the diatonic part, since none of the signs would have a different value in the two parts. For it so happens that the upper note of the different *pycna* is regularly avoided, with two exceptions (* and K), and these two notes do not occur in the diatonic part. On the other hand, if we suppose the enharmonic scale, several of the signs would indicate different pitch in the two parts: as Θ representing e♭ in the diatonic, and e in the enharmonic.

As has been said above, there are two notes which are foreign to the Phrygian scale: these are B and O. B is ordinarily a sign for g♭ or f♯. It occurs once only, and in the chromatic part of the melody, between two f's. It has the effect of a modulation, as we should call it, into the key of five flats. Modulation (μεταβολή) was not unknown to the Greeks, and in fact the *synemmenon* scale itself

contains a modulation, in the upper part, into the subdominant. This effect occurs repeatedly in our piece where $d\flat$ in successions like $f\ d\flat$, $d\flat\ f$ suggest the key of four flats. $G\flat$ suggests a further modulation into five flats (the Doric key), this being really the effect, in modern parlance.

With $O\ (b\sharp = c\flat)$ which occurs repeatedly, chiefly in the second part, the question is more difficult. It might suggest a modulation into the key of six flats (Doric *synemmenon*), but it is not used in this way. It occurs oftenest in connection with c (the minor tonic), leading up to it. This is a thing perfectly familiar to us, being in fact the sharp seventh of the minor scale, and our only difficulty is that the Greek theorists are silent about any such thing. Add to this that the flat seventh ($b\flat$) does not occur, is studiously avoided, and there seems to be only one solution, namely, that the Greeks knew and used a minor scale like ours, with a sharp seventh.

It is to be observed that not all the *pycna* of the scale are used in full, but that the upper note of three is avoided; thus there is no $e\sharp$ above or below (the note not occurring), and there is no $a\sharp$ below. The only full *pycna* are upper $g\ a\flat$, $a\sharp$ of the *diezeugmenon*, and $c\ d\flat$, $d\sharp$ of the *synemmenon*. Progressions of semitones are frequent, and their number is augmented by the use of $b\sharp$ instead of $b\flat$.

There remains the question as to the mode of the music, which was not necessarily Phrygian. The key of three flats was called the Phrygian key because the notes from f – f in it gave a Phrygian mode. But it does not follow that f was the tonic, and the evidence would seem to imply that it was not. The note is comparatively little used. The end of the composition is gone, but there is a certain half close (*syllaba anceps*) on g , which would seem to indicate the Doric mode. The general conduct of the melody (excepting always the use of the sharp seventh) is not unlike that of other Doric melodies, and so it is perhaps not a bad guess, that here too we have a sample of Doric (or Aeolic) melodization. Probably if we knew more of the practical working of the modes we could speak more decisively.

The following points seem to be established as a result of these finds: the possibility of combining diatonic and chromatic (or enharmonic) music in one and the same composition; the possibility of modulation into related keys, effected in part by the use of the *die-*

zeugmenon and the *synemmenon* forms of the scale in the same composition, and in part by the use of alien tones, not included in either of these forms; and finally the acquaintance of the Greeks with a scale containing a sharp seventh, corresponding to the sharp seventh of our minor scale.

The music is of a complicated sort and cannot be accompanied on a simple lyre in any of the tunings described by the authors. It evidently belongs to the refined, complex form of the art.

The effect of the melody is wild and cacophonous in the extreme, and is not outdone by anything in *Tristan*, or the *Götterdämmerung*. Certain strains impress themselves on the memory after a few hearings, but nevertheless a taste for Greek music must be (with us moderns) an acquired taste.